



NEWS RELEASE

OFFICE OF THE UNITED STATES ATTORNEY
WESTERN DISTRICT OF MISSOURI

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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

PROJECT CEASEFIRE

11 INDICTED FOR ILLEGAL FIREARMS, AMMUNITION

KANSAS CITY, Mo. – Todd P. Graves, United States Attorney for the Western District of Missouri, announced that 11 defendants were indicted by a federal grand jury today, in separate and unrelated cases, for illegally possessing firearms and ammunition. Today's indictments, Graves said, are part of Project Ceasefire, the district's ongoing anti-crime initiative.

* **Joseph R. Grooms**, 29, of Overland Park, Kan., was charged in a three-count indictment returned by a federal grand jury in Kansas City with being a felon in possession of a firearm and possessing with intent to distribute cocaine and methamphetamine.

Count One of the federal indictment alleges that **Grooms** was in possession of a Smith and Wesson .22-caliber pistol and a Cobra .380-caliber pistol on March 25, 2005. Under federal law, Graves explained, it is illegal for anyone who has been convicted of a felony to be in possession of any firearm or ammunition. **Grooms** has a 2002 criminal felony conviction for aggravated battery, a 1994 criminal felony conviction for aggravated robbery and a 1993 criminal felony conviction for involuntary manslaughter.

Counts Two and Three of the federal indictment alleges that **Grooms** possessed with intent to distribute cocaine, and possessed with intent to distribute methamphetamine both on Jan. 28, 2005.

This case is being prosecuted by Assistant U.S. Attorney Rudolph R. Rhodes, IV. It was investigated by the Kansas City, Mo., Police Department and the Bureau of Alcohol, Tobacco, Firearms and Explosives.

* **Donald E. Tooley**, 46, of Carrollton, Mo., was charged in an indictment returned by a federal grand jury in Kansas City for being a felon in possession of ammunition.

The federal indictment alleges that **Tooley** was in possession of 44 rounds of Remington .22-caliber ammunition on May 25, 2005. Under federal law, Graves explained, it is illegal for anyone who has been convicted of a felony to be in possession of any firearm or ammunition. **Tooley** has two 1995 criminal felony convictions for restraint, three 1995 criminal felony convictions for unlawful use of a weapon, two 1984 criminal felony convictions for stealing a motor vehicle and two 1984 criminal felony convictions for passing bad checks.

This case is being prosecuted by Assistant U.S. Attorney Jess E. Michaelsen. It was investigated by the Carrollton, Mo., Police Department, the Carrollton County, Mo., Sheriff's Department, the Missouri State Highway Patrol and the Bureau of Alcohol, Tobacco, Firearms and Explosives.

* **Royrico A. Bunch**, 25, of Kansas City, was charged in an indictment returned by a federal grand jury in Kansas City with being a felon in possession of a firearm.

The federal indictment alleges that **Bunch** was in possession of a Llama .45-caliber pistol on May 18, 2005. Under federal law, Graves explained, it is illegal for anyone who has been convicted of a felony to be in possession of any firearm or ammunition. **Bunch** has a 2002 criminal felony conviction for tampering and two 2001 criminal felony convictions for possession of a controlled substance and trafficking.

This case is being prosecuted by Assistant U.S. Attorney Rudolph R. Rhodes, IV. It was investigated by the Kansas City, Mo., Police Department and the Bureau of Alcohol, Tobacco, Firearms and Explosives.

* **Antwaen D. Reliford**, 28, of Kansas City, was charged in an indictment returned by a federal grand jury in Kansas City with being a felon in possession of a firearm.

The federal indictment alleges that **Reliford** was in possession of a Maadi Co., 7.62 x 39 mm assault rifle on May 25, 2005. Under federal law, Graves explained, it is illegal for anyone who has been convicted of a felony to be in possession of any firearm or ammunition. **Reliford** has a 2000 criminal felony conviction for trafficking and possessing with intent to distribute narcotics, a 1997 criminal felony conviction for trafficking drugs and a 1996 criminal felony conviction for tampering.

This case is being prosecuted by Special Assistant U.S. Attorney Stefan C. Hughes. It was investigated by the Kansas City, Mo., Police Department and the Bureau of Alcohol, Tobacco, Firearms and Explosives.

* **Michael G. Tracy**, 48, of Pleasant Hill, Mo., was charged in an indictment returned by a federal grand jury in Kansas City with being a felon in possession of a firearm.

The federal indictment alleges that **Tracy** was in possession of a North American Arms .22-caliber revolver on March 25, 2005. Under federal law, Graves explained, it is illegal for anyone who has been convicted of a felony to be in possession of any firearm or ammunition.

Tracy has two 1997 criminal felony convictions for possession of a controlled substance.

This case is being prosecuted by Assistant U.S. Attorney Rudolph R. Rhodes, IV. It was investigated by the Archie, Mo., Police Department, the Cass County, Mo., Sheriff's Department and the Bureau of Alcohol, Tobacco, Firearms and Explosives.

* **John E. Bato**, 42, of Gardner, Kan., was charged in an indictment returned by a federal grand jury in Kansas City with being a felon in possession of a firearm.

The federal indictment alleges that **Bato** was in possession of a Taurus 9 mm pistol on Nov. 10, 2004. Under federal law, Graves explained, it is illegal for anyone who has been convicted of a felony to be in possession of any firearm or ammunition. **Bato** has two 1996 criminal felony convictions for possession of a controlled substance and unlawful use of a weapon.

This case is being prosecuted by Assistant U.S. Attorney Bruce E. Clark. It was investigated by the Kansas City, Mo., Police Department and the Bureau of Alcohol, Tobacco, Firearms and Explosives.

* **Antoine M. Cain**, 25, of Kansas City, Mo., was charged in an indictment returned by a federal grand jury in Kansas City with being a felon in possession of a firearm.

The federal indictment alleges that **Cain** was in possession of a Smith and Wesson .38-caliber revolver on April 22, 2005. Under federal law, Graves explained, it is illegal for anyone who has been convicted of a felony to be in possession of any firearm or ammunition. **Cain** has a 2000 criminal felony conviction for unlawful use of a weapon.

This case is being prosecuted by Assistant U.S. Attorney Bruce E. Clark. It was investigated by the Kansas City, Mo., Police Department and the Bureau of Alcohol, Tobacco, Firearms and Explosives.

* **Kenneth R. Washam**, 53, of Independence, Mo., was charged in a two-count indictment returned by a federal grand jury in Kansas City with being a felon in possession of a firearm.

Count One of the federal indictment alleges that **Washam** was in possession of a Glock .45-caliber pistol, a Beretta .40-caliber pistol and a Beretta 9 mm pistol on Feb. 16, 2005. Under federal law, Graves explained, it is illegal for anyone who has been convicted of a felony to be in possession of any firearm or ammunition. **Washam** has a 2003 criminal felony conviction for tampering.

Count Two of the federal indictment alleges that **Washam** was in possession of a Heckler and Koch .40-caliber pistol, a Heckler and Koch 9 mm pistol and a North American Arms .22-caliber revolver on April 15, 2005.

This case is being prosecuted by Assistant U.S. Attorney Rudolph R. Rhodes, IV. It was investigated by the Kansas City, Mo., Police Department and the Bureau of Alcohol, Tobacco, Firearms and Explosives.

* **Christopher N. Gardner**, 27, of Belton, Mo., was charged in an indictment returned by a federal grand jury in Kansas City with being a subject of a full order of protection illegally in possession of 11 firearms.

The federal indictment alleges that **Gardner** was in possession of three pistols, a shotgun and seven rifles on April 29, 2005. Under federal law, Graves explained, it is illegal for anyone who is the subject of a full order of protection to be in possession of any firearm or ammunition.

This case is being prosecuted by Assistant U.S. Attorney Rudolph R. Rhodes, IV. It was investigated by the Grandview, Mo., Police Department, the Belton, Mo., Police Department and the Bureau of Alcohol, Tobacco, Firearms and Explosives.

* **Harvey A. Roach, Jr.**, 42, of Raytown, Mo., was charged in an indictment returned by a federal grand jury in Kansas City with being a subject of a full order of protection illegally in possession of a firearm.

The federal indictment alleges that **Roach** was in possession of a Smith and Wesson .357-caliber Magnum revolver on Sept. 1, 2004. Under federal law, Graves explained, it is illegal for anyone who is the subject of a full order of protection to be in possession of any firearm or ammunition.

This case is being prosecuted by Assistant U.S. Attorney Paul S. Becker. It was investigated by the Raytown, Mo., Police Department and the Bureau of Alcohol, Tobacco, Firearms and Explosives.

* **Abulfrido Tavira-Espinoza**, 21, a citizen of Mexico, was charged in an indictment returned by a federal grand jury in Kansas City with being an illegal alien in possession of a firearm.

The federal indictment alleges that **Tavira-Espinoza** was in possession of a Colt .25-caliber pistol on May 18, 2005. Under federal law, Graves explained, it is illegal for an alien who is illegally in the United States to be in possession of any firearm or ammunition.

This case is being prosecuted by Assistant U.S. Attorney Jess E. Michaelson. It was investigated by the Missouri State Highway Patrol and the Bureau of Immigration and Customs Enforcement.

Graves cautioned that the charges contained in these indictments are simply accusations and not evidence of guilt. Evidence supporting the charges must be presented to a federal trial jury, whose duty is to determine guilt or innocence.

Project Ceasefire

Project Ceasefire, launched in October 1999, is a cooperative initiative by federal and local law enforcement and the Kansas City Crime Commission that targets for federal prosecution persons who unlawfully use or possess firearms.

This news release, as well as additional information about the office of the United States Attorney for the Western District of Missouri, is available on-line at

www.usdoj.gov/usao/mow